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MR. WILLIAM BUNDY
WHITE HOUSE ~~EYES ONLY~~ FOR MCGEORGE BUNDY
BT

SECRET EYES ONLY

~~S E C R E T EYES ONLY~~ CITE CAS SAIGON 2440
FOR STATE, DOD, JCS AND CIA
HONOLULU FOR CINCPAC [redacted]
JOINT EMBASSY, MACV, CAS MESSAGE
REF DEPTEL 570

APPROVED FOR RELEASE
DATE: DEC 2002

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1. THIS IS THE SECOND OF THREE MESSAGES IN RESPONSE TO REFERENCE AND DEALS WITH LAO BORDER OPERATIONS.

2. IT IS RECOMMENDED THAT RESPONSIBILITY FOR SUPPORT OF PARAMILITARY OPERATIONS INTO SOUTHERN LAOS, BE TRANSFERRED FROM CAS TO MACV EFFECTIVE 1 DECEMBER 1963.

3. THE ASSETS NECESSARY FOR CROSS BORDER OPERATIONS HAVE IN THE PAST, BEEN BASED UPON AND DRAWN FROM THE BORDER SURVEILLANCE ASSETS AND POSTS NOW UNDER THE RESPONSIBILITY OF MACV. IT WOULD BE UNNECESSARILY COMPLICATED EITHER TO TRY TO ESTABLISH AN ENTIRE SEPARATE SET OF ASSETS AND LAUNCHING BASES FOR CROSS BORDER OPERATIONS OR ALTERNATIVELY TO NEGOTIATE THE AVAILABILITY OF SUCH ASSETS FOR CROSS BORDER MISSIONS ON AN INDIVIDUAL BASIS. MACV, THROUGH U.S. SPECIAL FORCES, IS CAPABLE AND EXPERIENCED IN DIRECTING AND OPERATING THE TYPE OF OPERATIONS INVOLVED IN THIS CROSS BORDER ACTIVITY.

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4. THE PRIMARY FACTOR WHICH WOULD SUGGEST THE DESIRABILITY OF CONTINUED CAS PARTICIPATION IS (THE DESIRABILITY OF A CLOSE) POLICY CONTROL AND CLEARANCE SYSTEM FOR CROSS BORDER OPERATIONS INCLUDING CONSULTATION WITH THE AMERICAN AMBASSADOR IN VIENTIANE, THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE, ETC. IT IS SUGGESTED THAT THIS REQUIREMENT COULD BE SATISFIED BY THE FOLLOWING ACTIONS:

A. ESTABLISHING A ZONE EXTENDING UP TO FIFTY KILOMETERS INTO LAOS FROM THE BORDER IN WHICH OPERATIONS COULD BE RUN WITHOUT INDIVIDUAL CLEARANCE. WASHINGTON MAY FEEL IT NECESSARY TO EXCLUDE CERTAIN AREAS FROM THIS ZONE, BUT THE PRINCIPLE WOULD BE NONETHELESS APPLICABLE.

B. MACV WILL UNDERTAKE TO INFORM THE AMEMBASSY SAIGON FULLY ON PLANS AND OPERATIONS WITHIN THIS ZONE SO THAT THE DEPARTMENT OF STATE AND AMEMBASSY VIENTIANE COULD BE KEPT CURRENT ON THESE ACTIVITIES. PLANS FOR OPERATIONS OUTSIDE THE SPECIFIED ZONE WOULD BE PROCESSED SIMULTANEOUSLY BY MACV AND AMEMBASSY THROUGH MILITARY AND STATE CHANNELS FOR WASHINGTON POLICY CLEARANCE.

5. WE WILL BE PREPARED TO DISCUSS THIS AT 20 NOVEMBER HONO CONFERENCE.

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